
Program Purpose:

The Governor's ThreeStar Program, administered by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD), is designed to help communities build a healthy and educated workforce supported by a strong and stable local government that provides security and safety and promotes county progress in the areas of economic development, responsible fiscal management, public safety, health and education.

2018 – FY19 Program Calendar

January 17, 2018 – Online Portal opens

January 31, 2018 – JECDB minutes for calendar year 2017 due, one for each quarter

February 28, 2018 – Fiscal Confirmation Letter due

March 29, 2018 – FY19 Activity Plan due

March 29, 2018 – FY19 Grant application due

ThreeStar Program Pillars:

The ThreeStar program is designed to focus on these areas, identified as critical to ensuring the success of Tennessee communities:

1. Jobs & Economic Development
2. Fiscal Strength & Efficient Government
3. Public Safety
4. Education & Workforce Development
5. Health & Welfare

Program Design

1. To participate in the ThreeStar program all counties must complete an annual activity plan and submit required documents.
 - a. To allow for the review and contracting process in the upcoming year, the annual activity plan and grant application must be submitted by March 29, 2018
 - b. This annual activity plan and report will document your community's current community development activities for each of the five program pillars and report on the progress and benefits.
2. The county's ThreeStar program will be administered by the County Mayor, the Joint Economic and Community Development Board (JECDB) or designated administration organization. Letter designating administrator must be submitted with Activity Plan by the County Mayor / Executive.
3. ThreeStar program activities occur on a fiscal year to allow activities to coincide with the school year and the state's fiscal cycle; however, required annual activities, such as participation in ECD sponsored events and JECDB meetings, must be completed during the calendar year prior to application submission in the spring. This enables a community to report on annual activities accomplished between January and December of 2017 when applying to the ThreeStar program in March 2018.
4. Progress indicators (scorecards) will be incorporated into the annual report and activity planning process by allowing applicants to address/explain activities or events during the year that impacted the annual indicator in either a positive or negative way.

Program Requirements for Eligibility

Eligibility for program participation—and to apply for ThreeStar grants—will be based on the completion of required annual activities, implementation of program and grant funded activities, and submission of an annual activity plan and report.

1. **Submission of completed Activity Plan** assessing and planning for activities in each of the five program pillars.
2. **Complete requirements for the Jobs and Economic Development pillar.** Documented in the activity plan (calendar basis):
 - Annually participate in three of the following events or programs:
 - ECD sponsored conference, workshop or training; ECD Governor’s Conference, Rural Development Conference, TEDC Conference, or TVA Economic Development Forum (other if approved by program manager).
 - ECD Community and Rural Development programs, including: *Tennessee Main Street, Tennessee Downtowns, SelectTennessee, Property Evaluation Program, Asset Based Planning, or Tourism Enhancement*
 - Submit a CDBG or FastTrack application.
 - Joint Economic Development Board meets statute requirements. JECDB meeting minutes must be submitted for documentation (signed, one from each quarter).
3. **Complete requirements for the Fiscal Strength and Efficient Government pillar.** Documented in the activity plan (calendar basis):
 - Review and sign the “Fiscal Strength & Efficient Government Annual Confirmation” letter. Letter must be submitted for documentation with the annual activity plan and report.
 - County commission and county mayor annual review of the debt management policy.
 - Annual acknowledgement by county mayor and county commission that an annual cash flow forecast must be prepared and submitted to the Comptroller prior to issuance of debt.
 - Acknowledgement by county mayor and county commission that it is required for county offices to have a documented set of internal controls.

Incentives and Associations with other ECD programs

1. **FastTrack Program Incentive:** Participating counties (and cities in these counties) will be eligible for a 4% discount (for eligible projects) on the business development ability-to-pay calculation each year the county fulfills the requirements of the ThreeStar program.
2. **CDBG Program Incentive:** Participating counties (and cities in these counties) will be eligible for a 4% discount on a community’s ability to pay. This discount may increase the grant award amount above the \$500,000 maximum grant amount (above \$300,000 for community livability projects) but the grant may not exceed \$525,000 (or \$315,000 for community livability projects).
3. **TNECD requires a county meet all ThreeStar requirements to participate in programs (including, but not limited to):** *Tennessee Downtowns, TN Main Street, Select TN, Property Evaluation, Site Development, Tourism Enhancement, Website Enhancement, or the ThreeStar grant program.*

ThreeStar Grant – 2018-FY19 – ALL Tier levels are eligible to apply for a ThreeStar Grant through a competitive process.

1. Counties must meet all ThreeStar requirements by program deadline to be eligible to apply for a grant.
2. ThreeStar Grant Applications must be complete and submitted through the online portal.
3. The ThreeStar Grant is designed to operate on a three-year cycle. During each of the three years, counties may apply for a grant to serve as seed money for activities (not to offset general operating expenses) focused on improving at least one focus area of the program. Grant funded projects should focus on activities with the greatest opportunity to impact the community in the areas of public safety, education and workforce development, and health and welfare.
4. ThreeStar grants are reimbursement grants. The project scope and budget will be developed by the program director and grantee– and all expenses will be checked against that scope and budget. Official contract specific reimbursement template must be used for reimbursement request. Expenses must be paid by Contract Grantee before submitting for reimbursement. Proof of Contract Grantee payment must be included in reimbursement request.
5. Grant status reports for open grants are required to be current to be eligible for grant application.
6. Grant funded projects should focus on activities with the greatest opportunity to impact the community in the measured areas. Grant funded activities cannot have been funded through ThreeStar within three years.
7. Grant activity restrictions:
 - Grant funds may be used for two scholarships per county to the Tennessee Basic Economic Development Course (TEBDC) during the course of the three year grant cycle, four Tennessee Certified Economic Developer (TCED) core (1 ½ day) courses, or a combination of one TBEDC course and two TCED 1 ½ day courses.
 - Grant funds may be used for the enhancement of county websites which benefit one or more of the program focus areas but **may not exceed \$5,000 in total over the course of the three year grant program cycle.**
 - **Not eligible:** Salaries, operation costs, travel expenses, and/or food are not eligible expenses. (Food items to be used in healthy eating programs may be eligible, please check with program director.) Registration to the ECD Governor’s Conference is not an eligible expense.

For more info contact Jody Sliger, Community Development Director, at Jody.Sliger@TN.gov or 615-393-4393.